Ministry of Agriculture

Annual Report for 2016-17

Government of Saskatchewan

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Letters of Transmittal

The Honourable Lyle Stewart
Minister of Agriculture

June 30, 2017

Her Honour, the Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield,
Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

May it Please Your Honour:

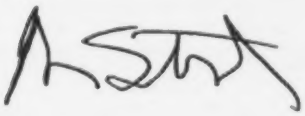
The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to continuing the steady growth of the province for the people of Saskatchewan, while observing the principles of accountability, transparency and responsible spending.

The 2016-17 Annual Report shows progress toward the commitments that relate to the Ministry as of March 31, 2017.

The initiatives and strategies pursued in 2016-17, and the results that have been achieved, are communicated to the legislature and to the people of Saskatchewan through this report. The results from the last fiscal year act as the basis for the initiatives in the next fiscal year and align with the Ministry's long-term strategic plan. This report, therefore, not only demonstrates responsible spending, it also directs future planning and resource allocation.

I respectfully submit the Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,



Lyle Stewart
Minister of Agriculture

Rick Burton
Deputy Minister of Agriculture

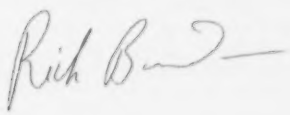
June 30, 2017

The Honourable Lyle Stewart
Minister of Agriculture

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017.

The Ministry's Annual Report was prepared under my direction in accordance with the Government's Accountability Framework and its system of planning, measuring and reporting. I am ultimately responsible for the financial administration and management control of the Ministry. All key actions and associated economic or fiscal implications contained in this report are, to the best of my knowledge, accurate and reliable.

Respectfully submitted,



Rick Burton
Deputy Minister of Agriculture

Introduction

This Ministry of Agriculture's annual report presents the Ministry's results for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017. It provides results of publicly committed strategies, key actions and performance measures identified in the Ministry of Agriculture Plan for 2016-17. It also reflects progress toward commitments from the Government Direction for 2016-17: Keeping Saskatchewan Strong, the Saskatchewan Plan for Growth – Vision 2020 and Beyond, throne speeches and the Ministry Strategic Plan.

The annual report demonstrates the Ministry's commitment to effective public performance reporting, transparency and accountability to the people of Saskatchewan, specifically the farmers, ranchers and agri-businesses of the province.

Alignment with Government's Direction

The Ministry's activities in 2016-17 align with Government's vision and four goals:

Saskatchewan's Vision

"... to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

- **Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people**
- **Meeting the challenges of growth**
- **Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people**
- **Delivering responsive and responsible government**

Together, all ministries and agencies support the achievement of Government's four goals and work towards a secure and prosperous Saskatchewan.

Ministry Overview

The Ministry's Role

The Ministry of Agriculture's employees are committed to providing excellent service to the farmers, ranchers and agri-businesses of the province. Just like our clients, agriculture is our way of life and together, we face the challenges, obstacles and opportunities associated with this thriving industry. Agriculture is reflected in the history of Saskatchewan and we are proud to continue that tradition through working partnerships with our clients.

Ministry of Agriculture employees reflect professional values and a passion for their work, including innovation, teamwork, integrity, service excellence and leadership at all levels.

The Ministry's mandate is to foster a commercially viable, self-sufficient and sustainable agriculture and food sector. We encourage farmers, ranchers and communities to develop higher value-added production and processing, and promote sustainable economic development in rural Saskatchewan through better risk management. Our mission is to enable a prosperous, market-driven agricultural industry through a supportive legislative framework, policies, programs and services.

We fulfill this mission by providing a broad range of agriculture-related programs, insurance and economic development opportunities to grow the industry. We have 10 Regional Offices, including the Agriculture Knowledge Centre, staffed with specialists who work directly with farmers, ranchers and industry agrologists on everything from crop selection and forage development, to farm business practices and livestock management. We partner with the federal government to provide a range of agriculture-related programs through the Growing Forward 2 program, providing producers and processors the tools and resources to innovate and capitalize on emerging market opportunities.

We also work to increase public knowledge of the sustainable farming practices that help drive our economy. We proactively engage with industry and other governments to secure market access and increase the demand for Saskatchewan food products in countries around the world. We maintain legislation and regulations to ensure public safety and protect the environment. We support the pursuit of agricultural research and ensure our farmers and ranchers have access to the latest technology that helps them grow. We provide a range of business risk management (BRM) programs so farmers can responsibly manage the risks associated with a market-driven industry. We support the continued expansion of provincial irrigation infrastructure so farmers can capitalize on higher value crops. We manage thousands of acres of agricultural Crown land for the benefit of all Saskatchewan citizens. Finally, we work to attract investment to increase value-added production in the province.

The Ministry budgeted 392.4 Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) to deliver its programs and services, with actual utilization for 2016-17 coming in at 383.8. The underutilization was mainly the result of FTE management across the Ministry.

Progress in 2016-17

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Enhanced Long-Term Growth, Competitiveness and Sustainability of the Industry

Targeted investment in infrastructure, science and innovation

Strategies

- Work with stakeholders to identify opportunities and set priorities;
- Transition to an outcome-based regulatory framework;
- Partner with organizations to achieve Growth Plan targets; and
- Create a stable business climate.

Results

In 2016, Saskatchewan farmers harvested 35.6 million tonnes, the second-largest crop in the province's history. While farmers were challenged by less than ideal weather conditions and reduced crop quality, the large harvest suggests that years of investment in research, technology, and science-based practices are paying off. Saskatchewan farmers continue to invest in cutting edge equipment, refine their business management skills and protect the land through sound environmental practices. Average crop production over the past four years has been 34.5 million tonnes, indicating continuous progress toward the Growth Plan target of 36 million tonnes by 2020 on a regular basis. The Ministry will continue to support farmers in their efforts to feed the world through responsible, science-based agriculture.

Similarly, irrigation infrastructure continued to grow and the Ministry's value-added strategy helped entrepreneurs expand beyond primary production through innovative processing techniques. While livestock sector revenue is down slightly, it is expected that strong demand from growing global populations will lead to the continued growth of the industry over the long term. The Ministry will continue to work with producers from across the province to implement agriculture strategies contributing to these impressive achievements.

CanMar Grain Products in Regina, SK.

Key Actions

In support of the Saskatchewan Plan for Growth goals and objectives, implement sector-driven strategies (Crops, Livestock, Irrigation and Value-Added Strategies) that increase investment in Saskatchewan, and contribute to the benefits from the growing demand for food, feed, fuel and fibre.

- Created the new Trade and Value-Added Branch to implement the updated Value-Added Strategy.
- Supported positive developments on some trade agreements/negotiations, including the Canada European Union Economic Trade Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement with South Korea. However, other agreements, like the Trans-Pacific Partnership and North American Free Trade Agreement, face some uncertainty due to recent international developments.
- Implemented the Crop Strategy, including Cropping for Success, through partnerships with commodity organizations to promote adoption of best management practices to enhance yields and maximize profit.
- Provided 3,079 pesticide licences to ensure the safe and environmentally-responsible application of agricultural pesticides.
- Implemented the Irrigation Strategy, including an assessment of irrigation infrastructure and consultations with industry on asset transfer and made changes to *The Irrigation Act*, 1996.
- Conducted irrigation suitability assessments on 8,964 acres of land. This is the first step toward expanding accessible irrigation infrastructure in the province.
- Provided technical information on issues impacting growers, including maximum pesticide residue limits, neonicotinoid pesticides, fusarium head blight and clubroot.
- Utilized process improvement techniques to efficiently process more than 1,100 samples for clients at the Provincial Crop Protection Lab, allowing for improved pest management decisions.
- Coordinated the implementation of 16 pest surveys to ensure that farmers are prepared to address a range of potential infestations across the province.
- Initiated an update of the Livestock Strategy to reflect current sector priorities and ensure alignment to policy and program development with the Next Policy Framework.

Collaborate with industry to improve coordination of research investments and technology transfer, including project funding, research capacity and funding for on-farm demonstration of new knowledge and technologies.

- Reviewed and approved agricultural research funding for a variety of projects, including:
  - Improving plant breeding technology specifically to test for toxins resulting from fusarium head blight infection in wheat;
  - Optimizing new sensory technology on farm equipment to minimize losses at harvest;
  - Developing technologies to prevent bovine respiratory disease;
  - Examining the effect of ergot-contaminated feed on bull fertility; and
  - Demonstrating the importance of nutrient stewardship.
- Conducted 67 projects in collaboration with the Irrigation Crop Diversification Corporation to promote irrigation best practices and increase adoption of high-value crops.

Work with stakeholders to examine infrastructure impacting competitiveness, labour and market conditions.

- Worked with the Crown utility corporations, including SaskWater, to identify water infrastructure needs to support future value-added processing growth and access services for greenfield and brownfield projects.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety and the Workers Compensation Board, the Ministry hosted an occupational health and safety workshop for nine meat processors. The workshop shared best practices and led to a better understanding that the sector needs to collaborate to improve workplace safety.
- Expedited projects that involved regulatory zoning issues for new value-added processing projects (pulse and oilseed processing).
- Hosted an Agri-value workshop with 130 industry participants to promote value-added processing and share available programming to support industry development.

Provide programs and funding to promote animal welfare, animal disease surveillance and prevention, and respond to emergency events.

- Initiated development of an Animal Welfare Strategy based on industry-led Codes of Practice.
- Supported Saskatchewan beef cattle producers who had their herds quarantined as a result of the discovery of bovine tuberculosis in Alberta.
- Funded through the Growing Forward 2 agreement disease surveillance programs in the province, including:
  - Antimicrobial use and resistance;
  - Swine influenza;
  - Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus;
  - Johne's Disease and Bovine Viral Diarrhea virus; and
  - The Provincial Rabies Response program.
- Supported the surveillance of chronic wasting disease, avian influenza and wild boar diseases in provincial wildlife.
- Continued to populate the Premises Identification (PID) database to assist in the management of animal health emergencies and natural disasters. As at March 31, 2017, more than 4,000 livestock premises were registered in Saskatchewan, a 100-per-cent increase from the previous year.
- Updated *The Premises Identification Regulations* to require mandatory PID registration in Saskatchewan. Producers can now comply with national traceability requirements and have a valuable tool to respond to animal emergencies.

Work with industry, local governments and other ministries to ensure agricultural needs are considered in the community planning process.

- Engaged the agricultural sector through various channels, including the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, to identify key concerns and prepare for negotiations for the Next Policy Framework partnership with the federal government.
- Partnered with the Ministry of Government Relations on the development of community planning frameworks, including the Municipal Planning Act, the review of tax policy and infrastructure and road maintenance.

Deliver Growing Forward 2 programming, including the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program (FRWIP), Farm Stewardship Program, Saskatchewan Lean Improvements in Manufacturing and Farm Business Management.

- Approved 14 projects totalling $371,000 under the Saskatchewan Agri-Value Initiative to support the development and expansion of small/medium-sized enterprises or producer organizations in adding value to agricultural products.
- Supported 12 research projects totalling $2.3 million through the Agriculture Development Fund, specifically to enable the expansion of the value-added industry.
- Approved 18 projects totalling $498,000 through the Market Development Program to assist industry, commodity associations, agencies and organizations in their support of international trade advocacy and marketing efforts.
- Approved eight projects totalling $4.1 million through the Saskatchewan Lean Improvements in Manufacturing program to improve operating efficiencies and support the adoption of modern technologies and best practices in the value-added sector.
- Supported 14 Industry Organization Development Fund projects totalling $104,000 to assist commodity associations with their role promoting the responsible growth of their industries.
- Developed 2,167 new irrigation acres through FRWIP to support secure water supplies for Saskatchewan farmers.
- Provided processors with $39,000 through the Meat Processor Livestock Welfare Program for improvements to the humane handling and stunning of livestock and poultry.
- Approved total program funding of $175,000 through the Food Safety Systems Program to support the adoption of best practice safety systems and enhancements to food processing facilities.
- Provided $195,000 through the On-Farm Food Safety Program to support industry for new equipment, certification and educational workshops.
- Supported livestock traceability and the adoption of modern equipment and software by providing $652,000 in rebate funding to livestock operations for eligible purchases.
- Provided $785,000 to several hundred producers through the Farm Business Development Initiative to support the adoption of better farm business management practices including finance, workforce planning and marketing.

Maximized the agricultural and public benefits of Crown land through sales and leasing programs.

- Sold a record number of lands that have no significant public, ecological or economic benefit through the strategically-focused 2015 Agricultural Crown Land Sale Program and *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* Moderate Ecological Value Land Sale Program. To some extent, this success was made possible by the new public online auction sales platform.

Enhance provincial leadership in agriculture biosciences and value-added areas by establishing a new food centre.

- Relocated the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre to the new Agri-Food Innovation Centre, which will be fully operational in 2017-18. The new Centre will be instrumental in developing new food products and technologies for Saskatchewan agri-businesses.

Integrate and coordinate livestock and forage research activities and establish the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence.

- Partnered with the University of Saskatchewan to initiate construction of the new Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence, expected to be substantially complete by March 2018. The Centre will combine research, demonstration and teaching facilities under one institute to benefit the livestock industry.

Support the Global Institute for Food Security and implementation of its strategic plan.

- The Ministry continues to support The Global Institute for Food Security in pursuing cutting-edge development of seeds, soils and software. The advancement of these three strategic pillars within the province greatly benefits and enables the Saskatchewan agriculture industry.

Work with industry to ensure *The Agricultural Implements Act* is meeting the needs of our agricultural producers.

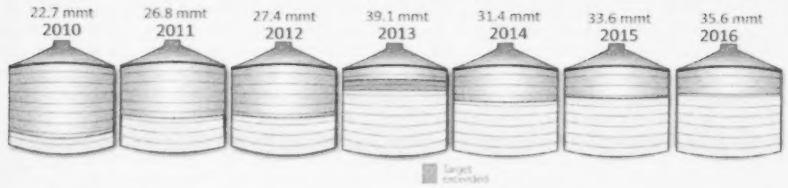
- Issued annual licences to 402 dealers and set the Saskatchewan Distributors Compensation Fund annual assessment fee to zero for 2016-17.
- Collaborated with individual producers, the Western Equipment Dealers Association, the Agricultural Implements Board and various other Ministries to resolve implement issues and maintain strong stakeholder communication.

Facilitate enhanced farm business management capabilities of Saskatchewan farmers through information services and extension activities.

- The Ministry's regionally based team of extension specialists worked closely with producers on topics ranging from succession planning to crop and livestock production. They delivered approximately 150 extension events reaching over 11,000 clients. Producers who attended one of four 'The Positives of Passing it On' workshops said they gained a better understanding of succession planning and planned to make changes in their farm operations as a result.
- Organized three Fusarium Information meetings attended by almost 450 producers to address questions about marketing fusarium-infected grain and implications for production practices for future years.
- The Ministry's Regional Offices and Agriculture Knowledge Centre responded to approximately 22,000 inquiries providing farmers and ranchers with information on a broad range of inquiries from livestock grazing to pest identification.

Performance Measures

ANNUAL CROP PRODUCTION



In 2016, Saskatchewan producers harvested 35.6 million tonnes, the second-largest crop in the province's history. Over the last four years, production has averaged 34.9 million tonnes and we are well on the way to achieving a consistent yield of 36.6 million tonnes by 2020.

Research into improving crop genetics, agronomics and agricultural technologies has resulted in cropping systems well-adapted to Saskatchewan's variable climate. Even though the 2016 season was challenging, yields and quality stayed strong. Farmers adopting sustainable production practices, such as judicious pesticide use, 4R fertilizer practices (Right Source at the Right Rate, Right Time and Right Place), zero tillage and crop rotations, helped protect both yields and the environment.

The Ministry will continue to work with producers and industry to achieve and sustain crop production at, or above, the Growth Plan target. Our commitment to best crop management practices will result in increased profitability and crop production in Saskatchewan.

ANNUAL LIVESTOCK SECTOR REVENUE

The Ministry aims to achieve significant growth in the livestock herd and expand livestock feeding, with a target to exceed $2 billion in livestock cash receipts consistently by 2020. Annual revenue has risen dramatically from $1.6 billion in 2012 to $2.7 billion in 2014 and $2.6 billion in 2015. Record-high cattle prices are the primary reason for the large revenue increases in 2014. 2016 livestock cash receipts are $1.99 billion. It is anticipated that 2017 livestock cash receipts will be above the $2 billion target established in the Livestock Strategy.

The growth in the global population, combined with expected increases in income levels in many countries, is anticipated to continue to increase demand for meat protein. Saskatchewan's 21 million acres of pasture and forage land are well-suited for livestock production, providing an excellent opportunity to meet this growing demand. The Ministry will continue to use its resources to emphasize the importance of adopting beneficial management practices to responsibly increase the herd size and profitability of Saskatchewan ranchers.

ANNUAL VALUE ADDED REVENUE

The Saskatchewan Plan for Growth target of $6 billion for annual value-added revenue is sending a compelling signal to industry, the research community and other governments that our value-added sector has significant opportunity to expand. A strong value-added industry will allow us to take advantage of global opportunities tied to increasing demands for food, feed, fuel and fibre, while growing our domestic and international markets.

Total revenue was $4.3 billion in 2016. The decline from the peak in 2013 is primarily due to the over-representation of canola oil in Saskatchewan's value-added revenues. According to Statistics Canada, the export price for canola oil declined from $1,237 per tonne in 2013 to $1,069 per tonne in 2015 and remained relatively stable at $1,074 per tonne in 2016. The decline in price was partially offset by export volumes, which increased by more than 20 per cent.

The craft brewery is an example of growth in the value-added sector. Since the first craft brewery opened in 2004, Saskatchewan has experienced tremendous growth in the industry. In 2016, our province was home to 36 small and medium-sized breweries. Many showcase local Saskatchewan ingredients including lentils, saskatoon berries, honey and sour cherries. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of our provincial breweries, the craft brewing industry expanded production from 1,270,000 litres in 2014 to 1,434,500 litres in 2016.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Enhanced Trade Advocacy

Support industry to enhance trade in priority markets

Strategies

- Develop and implement trade strategies for key agriculture markets;
- Collaborate with partners, including industry, to access target markets; and
- Influence federal trade policy to reflect Saskatchewan priorities.

Results

In 2015, exports of agri-food products from Saskatchewan, such as lentils, canola oil and wheat, increased to $15.3 billion, exceeding the 2020 target in the Plan for Growth. The leadership of producers and agri-businesses is largely responsible for this impressive achievement. The Ministry plays an active role by supporting international trade missions, collaborating with industry associations and representing the province's economic interests at negotiating tables. In 2016, agri-food exports were $14.4 billion, primarily due to fluctuations in market prices.

The Ministry continued to build on progress made on a large-scale 2015 trade mission to India with two smaller missions in 2016 to develop working relationships with Trade Commissioners and expand economic opportunities in the vast Asian market. India is critical to meeting Saskatchewan's Growth Plan targets for agriculture trade, as Saskatchewan accounted for 37 per cent ($1.5 billion) of all Canadian exports to India in 2016, largely due to pulse exports.

Key Actions

Provide timely and accurate information to industry when trade barriers are a result of production methods, industry practices, pests or pesticides.

- Organized and participated in trade advocacy efforts through the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region Agriculture Working Group meeting in Calgary, Alberta.
- Participated on Federal-Provincial Agricultural Trade Policy Committee and had regular engagement with the Market Access Secretariat and with other provinces.
- Informed industry of the trade risks arising from the Government of India's initial decision to not extend the current fumigation derogation and efforts to address market access concerns for food grade flax and canola into China.

Saskatchewan China Agricultural Trade Conference in September 2016.

Work with industry to promote Saskatchewan products through the Market Development Program, collaborate on incoming and outgoing missions, and provide services and undertake projects that increase industry's capacity to market Saskatchewan products.

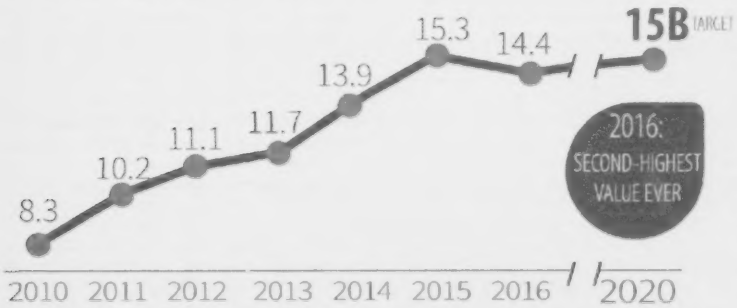
- Conducted two missions to India, which included stops in Dubai and the United Arab Emirates, to focus on building a trade and investment approach to the Indian market and establish working relationships with regional Trade Commissioners. The missions resulted in over 50 meetings with Canadian Trade Commissioners and local stakeholders, as well as participation in multiple conferences including AgriTech, Gulfood and India's Food and Hospitality Fair.
- Sponsored the State Agricultural Rural Leaders Ag Chairs Summit in Louisiana. The sponsorship was used alongside contributions from other provinces to support a Canada profiling session and a breakout session on trade.
- Collaborated on four incoming missions from India, Western Europe and Ukraine during Canada's Farm Progress Show and Canadian Western Agribition.

Work with industry and the federal government to pursue Saskatchewan's export interests on market access issues and in bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations.

- Participated in the Trans-Pacific Partnership consultation session held in Saskatoon on April 20, 2016.
- Worked with industry to organize a call with the Federal Provincial Agriculture Trade Policy Committee concerning regulatory barriers in export markets.
- Worked with industry and the federal government to pursue Saskatchewan's export interests on market access issues and in trade negotiations, including expanding trade with India.
- Participated in the Tri-National Agriculture Accord in Niagara Falls, Ontario to discuss important trade and development-related priorities and coordinate actions to address future risks and growth opportunities for the agricultural sector.

Performance Measures

VALUE OF AGRI-FOOD EXPORTS



In 2016, Saskatchewan exported more than $200 million worth of agricultural products to each of the 13 top markets around the world.

Under the Saskatchewan Plan for Growth, the province established a target of $15 billion in agri-food exports by 2020; this target builds on our traditional strengths in primary production and ongoing efforts to expand value-added activity. In 2016, Saskatchewan recorded agriculture and food exports of $14.4 billion, down 5.9 per cent from $15.3 billion in 2015.

The decrease in agricultural exports was driven by lower demand from countries like India as well as a delayed and poor quality harvest in the fall of 2016. Canola seed, chickpeas and canola oil all had significant gains in export value. Although our exports had a decrease year-over-year, growth in world populations and rising income levels will continue to drive our exports in the medium to long term. Global demand for food and agricultural-related goods will continue to increase. The Ministry will continue to work with agri-businesses to take advantage of emerging opportunities by expanding market presence, influencing federal trade negotiations and collaborating with the private sector.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Enhanced Client Service

Efficiently develop and deliver effective programs and services

Strategies

- Implement modern service delivery tools and techniques;
- Work with clients and stakeholders to develop, evaluate and enhance programs, services and legislation; and
- Implement service standards throughout the Ministry.

Results

The Ministry of Agriculture is committed to service excellence and strives to provide quality, timely services to clients. The Ministry also seeks to continuously improve programs and services and the way it delivers them to clients. In 2016, the Ministry began reviewing agriculture extension services, which includes the business information, advice and support provided by specialists in regional offices around the province and at extension events, information provided online and through the toll-free Agriculture Knowledge Centre phone line and in a variety of print and electronic publications. The goal of the modernization effort is to ensure extension activities continue to drive sustainable growth and help producers be competitive in a global market. Also in 2016, the Digital Strategy for the transition to online service delivery was updated to reflect changing priorities. This strategy is closely linked to the government's transition of its online presence to Saskatchewan.ca, which now houses all of the Ministry's web content, including crop updates, market trends, program offerings, news releases and contact information.

Ministry extension specialists led several in-person events on a range of topics of importance to clients in 2016-17, including the Saskatchewan Ranch Management Forum; a three-day event in February aimed at beef cattle producers. The days were filled with presentations, demonstrations and tours revolving around cattle health, nutrition, reproduction, low-stress handling and technology. More than 50 participants took part.

Comments from producers included:

"Great forum! Thanks for all your work."

"Very practical information."

Saskatchewan.ca is where you can find all of the Ministry's web content.

Key Actions

Provide support and programming to patron groups of transitioning federal community pastures.

- Worked with pasture patron groups to form entities to manage federal pastures through long-term leases. As of March 31, 2017, 43 pastures have transitioned to patron control. The remaining 19 will transfer by March 31, 2018.

Develop and implement online accessibility strategies for public access of Crown agricultural lands.

- Completed the design phase for the Enterprise Crown Land Management System and prepared for the development phase, expected to be fully implemented by January 2019.

Develop and implement a digital strategy that contains new ways of offering Ministry services, including online delivery, to clients.

- Began implementing the Ministry's new Digital Strategy to transition Ministry services online to improve access and the client experience. This includes new projects to transition Crown Land management and financial program delivery to the government's online portal.

Performance Measures

PERCENTAGE OF CLIENTS SATISFIED WITH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The Ministry offers many programs and services designed to assist farmers and ranchers, including a wide variety of print and electronic publications, customer service telephone lines, specialist services and program development. Technological advancements in areas such as social media, smart phones, tablets and online transactions are happening at a rapid pace. As technology changes, the Ministry will continue to update its service and information delivery systems to ensure clients' needs are being met, and programs and services are supportive of their overall agricultural operations.

As part of the Ministry's extension services review to help determine how to provide the best services using the most effective delivery options, an online survey was undertaken in March 2017. According to the survey, 60 per cent of respondents were satisfied when asked to rate their "overall satisfaction with the services you received from Saskatchewan Agriculture." A further 25 per cent were neutral, selecting three on the five-point scale, where one indicated "strongly dissatisfied" and five indicated "strongly satisfied."

In the 2015 Client Services Survey, traditionally conducted every two years to measure how we are doing, 52 per cent of producers were satisfied with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture based on the question: "How would you rate your overall satisfaction with Saskatchewan Agriculture service delivery?" In 2012, 66 per cent of producers surveyed were satisfied and in 2008, 39 per cent of producers were satisfied or completely satisfied.

The Extension Services Survey replaced the need for a Client Services survey in 2017. The next satisfaction survey is anticipated in 2019.

Government Goals

Meeting the challenges of growth

Improved Public Trust and Understanding of Agriculture

Partner to promote the benefits of agriculture

Strategies

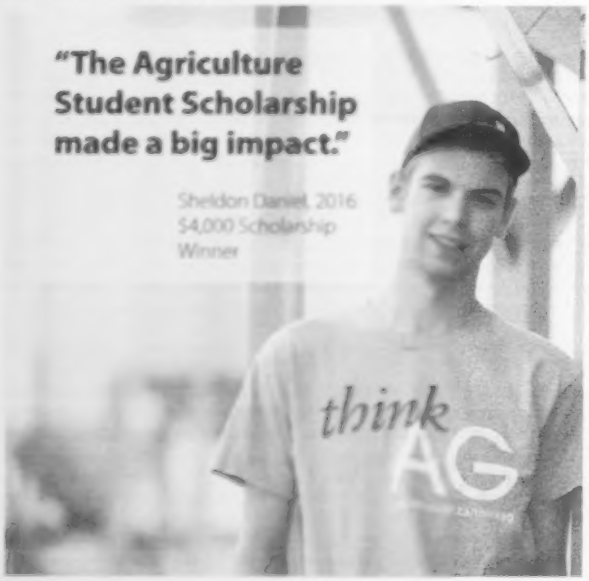
- Promote agricultural learning in the Saskatchewan educational system;
- Implement a targeted agriculture awareness strategy;
- Promote careers in the agriculture and food sector to youth; and
- Ensure social licence is a priority nationally.

Results

With the majority of farmland in Canada, a world-class agricultural research hub in Saskatoon and thousands of innovative farmers and ranchers, Saskatchewan is at the forefront of agricultural production. Modern agriculture is technologically advanced and regulated based on sound science. However, not all consumers are as connected to the farm as they once were, and public understanding of agriculture is sometimes based on perception versus facts.

The Ministry is working to ensure Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers can continue to access the tools and technologies they need to produce high quality, safe and affordable food. This social licence to operate is secured not only through continuing to lead with science but also through raising public awareness about modern production practices and why they are appropriate. The Ministry works closely with industry stakeholders to provide accurate information on the science, significance and sustainability of the agriculture industry.

Agriculture continues to help drive the Saskatchewan economy and presents many job opportunities, which is why programs targeted at youth remain important, along with the development of curriculum-based resources to supplement student education on the science of agriculture.



Key Actions

Promote the sustainability of agriculture.

- Participated in the 'Our Food Has a Story' themed Agriculture Month in October 2016, encouraging industry stakeholders to connect with consumers through shared values and a focus on telling agriculture's sustainability story. The campaign featured 49 media stories and 2.7 million social media connections.
- Supported Agriculture in the Classroom to produce 100 additional Environmental Science kits this year, which reached 2,500 students with information about agriculture's relationship with the environment.
- To better understand and address consumer perspectives on how the industry's sustainability affects public trust, the Ministry invested in the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity to support food system research, strategy and coordination.

Promote career opportunities in the agriculture industry to Saskatchewan youth.

- Partnered with industry associations to encourage more than 700 students to pursue a future in agriculture through thinkAG Career Expo workshops.
- Participated in seven career fairs across the province and reached more than 7,000 people through the thinkAG web hub.
- Recognized four outstanding agricultural advocates for their efforts to promote careers in the sector through the Agriculture Student Scholarship Program.

Foster the development of strategic partnerships with industry, educational institutions and governments that will secure the agriculture sector's social licence to operate.

- Developed a Social Licence Framework to encourage collaboration between government and industry to address key consumer concerns with the potential to impact agriculture's social licence.
- Continued to improve industry's understanding of the importance of social licence, based on the understanding that consumer perception of the industry is the greatest risk facing Saskatchewan agriculture.
- Continued to encourage industry engagement by organizing 11 projects totalling $117,000 in the Agriculture Awareness Initiative Program that prepared producers for direct involvement, and helped partners reach important audiences such as youth and consumers.
- Supported key partners, including Saskatchewan's Farm and Food Care, 4-H and Ag in the Classroom, to amplify efforts to build public trust through annual grants totalling $850,000. These partners helped Saskatchewan educators create agriculture-based curriculum, develop leadership skills for students in rural areas and promote careers in the agriculture industry.

"Modern agriculture allows us to be more sustainable in what we do and enables us to provide nutritious food in a way that's good for the environment too."

Jake Legaee & Sarah Legaee, farmers

Performance Measures

PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF AGRICULTURE AS MEASURED BY THE PERCENTAGE OF SASKATCHEWAN RESIDENTS WITH A POSITIVE PERCEPTION OF AGRICULTURE

Since 2013, the Ministry has participated in an annual omnibus poll to capture how agriculture is viewed by Saskatchewan residents. In the 2016 poll, 89 per cent of the 800 respondents chose either "strongly agree" or "agree" when asked: "I have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture." This level of agreement is similar to the 89.6 per cent recorded in 2015, 87 per cent in 2014 and 89 per cent in 2013.

The 2016 survey also asked Saskatchewan residents for their opinions on agricultural technologies (including genetic modification), livestock welfare, food safety, farm management and the impact agriculture has on society and the environment. The survey also gauged public knowledge of credible sources of agriculture information and their overall trust of farmers and ranchers.

The survey results indicated that Saskatchewan producers continue to have the support of the public and public perception of agriculture is mostly positive. Work still needs to be done to build awareness about production practices and Canada's robust regulatory system. Another omnibus survey will take place in 2017.

2016-17 Financial Overview

Expenses:

During 2016-17, the Ministry of Agriculture incurred expenses of $426.8 million, which is $37.0 million over the original expense budget of $389.8 million. The increase in expenses consisted of $37.4 million in Crop Insurance Premiums due to increased insured acres, higher premium rate crops and higher than expected wildlife damage claims; $21.0 million in AgriStability program payments based on the winter forecast and $3.3 million in Crown Land Sale Incentives due to a higher number of applications at the higher incentive rate.

Offsetting these increases were reductions in expenditures consisting of a $7.7 million in operational savings achieved through efficiencies, FTE management and fiscal restraint; $5.4 million in Growing Forward 2 transfers out of the Saskatchewan Agricultural Stabilization Fund; $4.2 million reduction in operational and program spending as a result of funding being designated as Growing Forward 2; $3.9 million in reduced AgriStability and Crop insurance administration and $3.3 million in AgriInvest program payments based on the winter forecast.

The revised budget includes supplementary estimates of $51.1 million for Crop Insurance Premiums, AgriStability payments and Crown Land Sale Incentives.

The following table provides a summary of expenses:

	Original Budget ($000's)	Revised Budget ($000's)	Actual ($000's)
Personal Services	27,379	27,379	24,637
Supplier and Other Payments	17,403	17,403	13,735
Transfers to Individuals	246,015	297,085	312,615
Transfers for Public Services	97,912	97,912	74,655
Amortization Expense	1,058	1,058	1,136
Total	**389,767**	**440,837**	**426,778**

Revenue:

In 2016-17, the Ministry collected $251.1 million in revenue; down $32.7 million from the Budget Estimate of $283.8 million. The decreased revenue is primarily attributed to a $19.6 million decrease in Crown Land Sales due to lower than anticipated participation in the Crown Land Sale Incentive Program and higher than expected sales of land with a net book value; $8.9 million decrease in federal funding for administration of AgriStability and Crop Insurance, and Growing Forward 2 revenue partially offset by higher than budgeted revenue from the transfer of land improvements from the federal pasture program; $3.7 million decrease in revenue from surface leases; and $1.7 million decrease in Other Revenue primarily due to a delay in the remittance of oil and gas revenue from the Pastures Revolving Fund.

Offsetting these below budgeted revenues is an unbudgeted $0.7 million for the refund of previous year expenditures due to the recovery of AgriStability overpayments and a return of prior years' Agriculture Research grant payments and $0.5 million above budget revenue from the sale of resource considerations and other sales, services and service fees.

FTEs:

The Ministry budgeted 392.4 FTEs to deliver its programs and services, with actual personnel deployed for 2016-17 coming in at 383.8. The underutilization was mainly the result of FTE management across the Ministry.

2016-17 Financial Schedules

Ministry of Agriculture Schedule of Revenue and Expenditures	(in thousands of dollars) 2015-16 Actual	2016-17 Estimates	2016-17 Actual	Variance over (under)	Notes
Revenue					
Land Revenue:					
Crown Land Sales	$ 29,199	165,600	145,957	(19,643)	1
Rent and Penalty on Land Leases	43,844	42,400	38,734	(3,666)	2
Land Licenses and Permits	509	350	615	265	3
Interest	22	15	82	67	
Receipts from Federal Government	65,550	72,719	63,824	(8,895)	4
Privileges, Licenses and Permits	182	173	191	18	
Sales, Services and Service Fees	372	333	458	125	5
Interest Revenue	205	100	88	(12)	
Other Revenue	9,673	1,936	283	(1,653)	6
Refund of Previous Year Expenditures	5,409	180	859	679	7
Total Revenue	$ 154,965	283,806	251,091	(32,715)	
Expenditure					
Central Management and Services	$ 9,086	11,256	9,335	(1,921)	1
Industry Assistance	$ 6,435	7,376	6,750	(626)	2
Land Management					
Land Management Services	$ 4,517	6,065	5,410	(655)	3
Land Revenue Bad Debt Allowances	48	200	177	(23)	
Crown Land Sale Incentive Program	1,538	17,200	20,497	3,297	4
Subtotal	$ 6,103	23,465	26,084	2,619	
Policy and Planning	$ 2,378	3,080	3,776	696	5
Research and Technology					
Project Coordination	$ 913	1,030	945	(85)	6
Research Programming	35,396	25,776	25,800	24	
Subtotal	$ 36,309	26,806	26,745	(61)	

Ministry of Agriculture Schedule of Revenue and Expenditures		2015-16 Actual	2016-17 Estimates	2016-17 Actual	Variance over (under)	Notes
		(in thousands of dollars)				
Regional Services						
Regional Services	$	33,056	39,840	31,802	(8,038)	7
Financial Programs						
Financial Programs Management	$	11,560	24,246	15,489	(8,757)	8
Business Risk Management						
Crop Insurance Program Delivery	$	30,625	31,601	29,901	(1,700)	9
Crop Insurance Premiums		128,743	134,355	171,765	37,410	10
AgriStability Program Delivery		18,520	20,099	17,911	(2,188)	11
AgriStability		24,016	31,085	52,090	21,005	12
AgriInvest		36,428	37,500	34,202	(3,298)	13
Subtotal	$	238,332	254,640	305,869	51,229	
Budget Appropriation	$	343,259	390,709	425,850	35,141	
Supplementary Estimates/Special Warrants	$	–	51,070	–	(51,070)	
Statutory Adjustment	$	–	–	–	–	
Total Revised Appropriation	$	343,259	441,779	425,850	(15,929)	
Capital Asset Acquisitions	$	(359)	(2,000)	(146)	1,854	14
Amortization of Capital Assets	$	1,868	1,058	1,136	78	15
Other	$	383	–	(62)	(62)	16
Total Revised Estimates and Expenses	$	345,151	440,837	426,778	(14,059)	
FTE Staff Complement (FTE – Full Time Equivalent)		372.5	392.4	383.8	(8.6)	1

Financial Schedules – Notes

Explanations of variances which exceed $50,000 between Estimates and Actuals.

Revenue

1. Decreased acres sold and a higher percentage of sales with net book value under the Crown Land Sale Incentive Program.
2. Decrease in Petroleum and Natural Gas Surface leases.
3. Increase in the sale of land with resource considerations.
4. Decreased revenue from the federal government for AgriStability and Crop Insurance administration and non-BRM programs under Growing Forward 2 partially offset by the transfer of land improvements related to the federal pasture transition program.
5. Increased land sale fees and miscellaneous revenue.
6. Delay in remittance of oil and gas revenue from Pastures Revolving Fund.
7. Refund of prior years' AgriStability payments from the federal government due to the recovery of over payments and a return of prior years' Agriculture Research grant payments.

Expenditure

1. FTE management and savings in accommodations and other operating expenses.
2. Decreased funding under miscellaneous grants, Industry Organization Development Fund and invasive plants programs under Growing Forward 2.
3. Decreased system development costs partially offset by higher salary costs and other operating expenses related to the administration of the 2015 Crown Land Sale Incentive Program.
4. Higher than expected incentives due to more land sales under the 2015 Agricultural Crown Land Sale Incentive Program at the higher incentive rate.
5. Increased due to the transfer of staff and functions into the new Trade and Value-Added Branch partially offset by decreases from FTE management and other operating savings.
6. Decreased due to FTE management and operational savings.
7. Decreased due to Growing Forward 2 funding transferred to other areas, FTE management and operational savings.
8. Decreased due to Growing Forward 2 funding transferred to other areas, FTE management and savings in contractual services.
9. Decreased crop insurance program delivery costs due to FTE management and operational savings.
10. Increased crop insurance premiums due to an increase in insured acres and higher premium rate crops as well as higher than expected wildlife damage claims.
11. Decreased AgriStability program delivery costs due to FTE management and operational savings.

Financial Schedules – Notes

12. Increased provincial contributions required to fully fund the AgriStability 2016 program year costs from the original federal government's forecast. AgriStability program payments for the 2016 program year of $50,884 have been estimated using economic models which consider the number of program participants, estimated reference margins, estimated claim year margins based on projected forecast commodity prices, crop yields, inventory changes and forecast changes in eligible income and expenses on an aggregate basis for different sectors of the agricultural industry. Based on the above key assumptions and using a statistical model for projections, estimated provincial contributions for the current year would be in the range of $39,928 to $66,624. Estimated program payments for prior program years are based on potential payments for claims not yet processed by Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC).
13. Decreased provincial contributions required to fully fund the AgriInvest 2016 program year costs from the original federal government's forecast. AgriInvest program payments for the 2016 program year of $34,196 have been estimated using economic models which consider the number of program participants, estimated reference margins, estimated claim year margins based on projected forecast commodity prices, crop yields, inventory changes and forecast changes in eligible income and expenses on an aggregate basis for different sectors of the agricultural industry. Based on the above key assumptions and using a statistical model for projections, estimated provincial contributions for the current year would be in the range of $33,029 to $35,362. Estimated program payments for prior claim years are based on potential payments for claims not yet processed by the federal government.
14. Below budget system development capital expenditures.
15. Increased amortization due to assets transferred under the federal pasture program transition.
16. Change in prepaid expenses.

FTE Staff Complement

1. Ministry of Agriculture's 2016-17 FTE budget is 392.4. The variance to budget number of (8.6) is the result of FTE management.

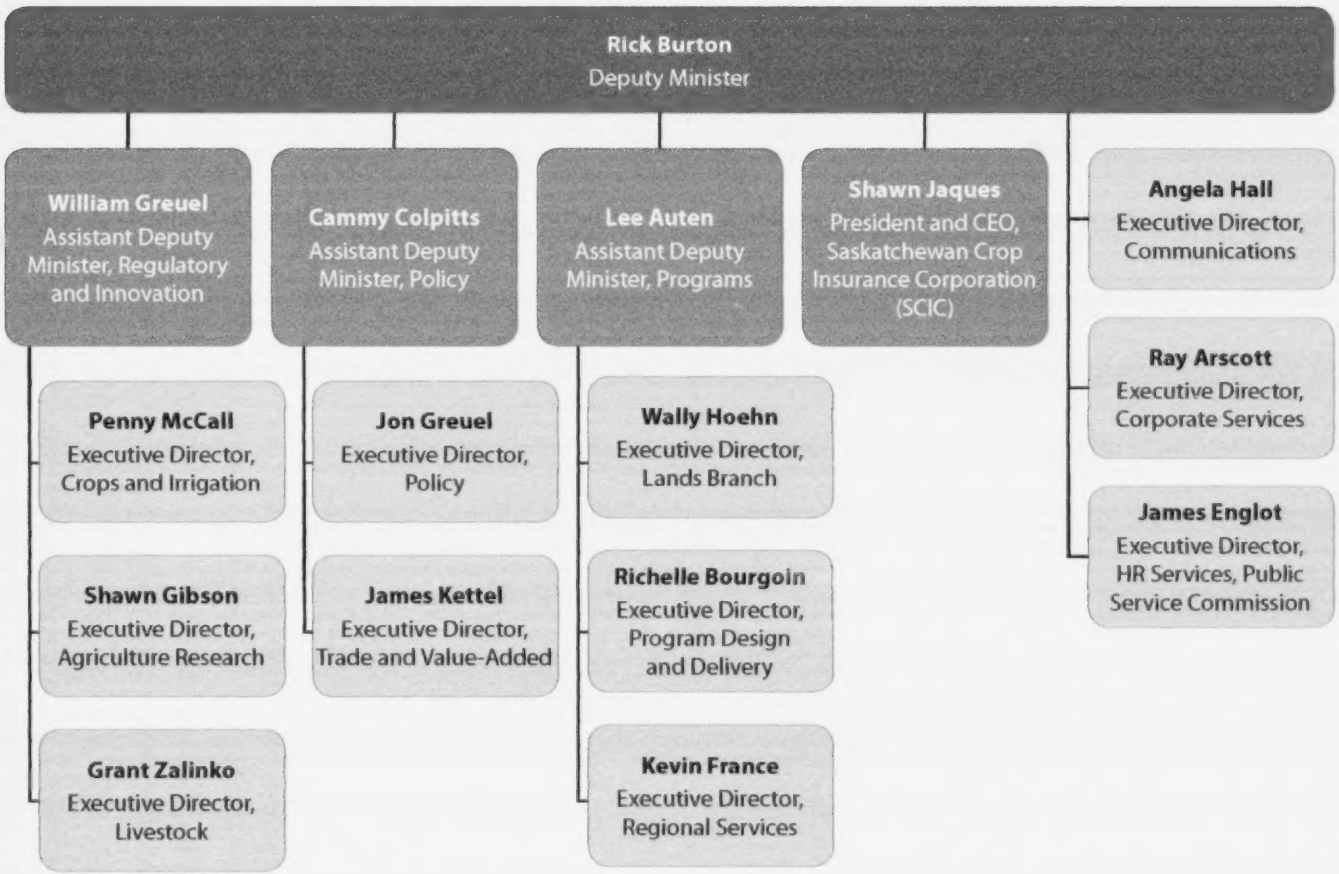
For More Information

For more information on Ministry of Agriculture programs and services:

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377 or by email at aginfo@gov.sk.ca; or
- Visit the Ministry's website at Saskatchewan.ca/agriculture.

Appendices

Appendix A



Appendix B

(Loans & Guaranteed Debt)

Livestock Loan Guarantee (LLG) Program

The LLG Program facilitates growth of Saskatchewan's livestock industry by providing producer associations access to credit at favourable interest rates and with limited collateral requirements for purchase of cattle, sheep or bison. The Program may also be used as a management tool to generate cash flow through retained ownership options. The LLG Program supports increased livestock production by providing guarantees to lenders who make loans to production associations and individual feedlot operators.

During 2016-17, budgeted and actual guarantees under this program were:

Breeder Associations (In thousands of dollars)	**Budget**	**Actual**	**Variance** Over (Under)
Beginning Balance	15,000	10,236	
Additions	–	1,868	
Reductions	–	–	
Ending Balance	15,000	12,104	(2,896)

Explanation of Variance:

Program participation is lower as a result of market uncertainty, producers exiting the livestock industry and additional options for financing.

Feeder Associations (In thousands of dollars)	**Budget**	**Actual**	**Variance** Over (Under)
Beginning Balance	10,000	9,016	
Additions	–	–	
Reductions	–	(2,180)	
Ending Balance	10,000	6,836	(3,164)

Explanation of Variance:

Program participation is lower as a result of market uncertainty, producers exiting the livestock industry and additional options for financing.

Feedlot Construction Loan Guarantees (In thousands of dollars)	**Budget**	**Actual**	**Variance** Over (Under)
Beginning Balance	2,000	203	
Additions	–	–	
Reductions	–	(188)	
Ending Balance	2,000	15	(1,985)

Explanation of Variance:

No new feedlot construction has taken place due to current overcapacity in the feedlot sector.

Appendix C

(Legislation Administered)

The Agriculture Administration Act
The Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan Act
The Agricultural Equipment Dealerships Act
The Agricultural Implements Act
The Agricultural Leaseholds Act
The Agricultural Operations Act
The Agricultural Safety Net Act
The Agri-Food Act, 2004
The Agrologists Act, 1994
The Animal Identification Act
The Animal Products Act
The Animal Protection Act, 1999
The Apiaries Act, 2005
The Crop Payments Act
The Diseases of Animals Act
The Expropriation (Rehabilitation Projects) Act
The Farm Financial Stability Act
The Farming Communities Land Act
The Grain Charges Limitation Act
The Horned Cattle Purchases Act
The Irrigation Act, 1996
The Land Bank Repeal and Temporary Provisions Act
The Leafcutting Beekeepers Registration Act
The Line Fence Act
The Municipal Hail Insurance Act
The Pastures Act
The Pest Control Act
The Pest Control Products (Saskatchewan) Act
The Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute Act, 1999
The Provincial Lands Act, 2016 *
The Sale or Lease of Certain Lands Act *
The Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation Act
The Saskatchewan 4-H Foundation Act
The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act
The Stray Animals Act
The Veterinarians Act, 1987
The Veterinary Services Act
The Weed Control Act

*Joint responsibility

Appendix D

(Special Purpose Funds and Agencies with Legislative Responsibilities to Saskatchewan Agriculture)

Special Purpose Funds

Horned Cattle Fund
Pastures Revolving Fund
Saskatchewan Agricultural Stabilization Fund

Agencies

Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan
Agricultural Implements Board
Agri-Food Council
Irrigation Crop Diversification Corporation
Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
Crop Reinsurance Fund of Saskatchewan

Agencies under the Agri-Food Council

Canaryseed Development Commission of Saskatchewan
Chicken Farmers of Saskatchewan
Saskatchewan Alfalfa Seed Producers Development Commission
Saskatchewan Barley Development Commission
Saskatchewan Beekeepers Development Commission
Saskatchewan Broiler Hatching Egg Producers' Marketing Board
Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission
Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association
Saskatchewan Egg Producers
Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission
Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission
Saskatchewan Milk Marketing Board
Saskatchewan Mustard Development Commission
Saskatchewan Oat Development Commission
Saskatchewan Pulse Crop Development Board
Saskatchewan Sheep Development Board
Saskatchewan Turkey Producers' Marketing Board
Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission
Saskatchewan Winter Cereals Development Commission
Sask Pork

Appendix E

(Third Party Funding)

		($000's)
Industry Assistance Grants		
Budgeted Industry Assistance Grants		3,774
Prairie Diagnostic Services Inc.	2,865	
Saskatchewan 4-H Council Inc.	300	
Agriculture in the Classroom	150	
Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture	125	
Budgeted grants $50,000 and under	334	
Miscellaneous Industry Assistance Grants		107
Miscellaneous grants $50,000 and under		
Comprehensive Pest Control Program		
Fieldworker Program – support for the control of pests and diseases such as rats, perennial weeds, Hantavirus and Dutch Elm Disease.		1,400
Invasive Plants Program – funding to increase awareness of invasive plants in rural municipalities and to assist in developing multi-jurisdictional management plans for problem species.		749
Black Fly Control Program – funding to purchase and apply chemicals to control the problems caused by black flies and the harm invoked on livestock in northern Saskatchewan.		138
Beaver Control Program – funding to support the removal of problem beavers.		533
Feral Wild Boar Program – funding for removal of problem wild boar that cause livestock deaths and agricultural property damage.		50
Total Industry Assistance		6,750
Research and Technology Grants		
Research and Development Grants		19,305
Funding provided through a number of mechanisms, including the Agriculture Development Fund, to support research and development. Areas of focus include, but are not limited to: improved food quality and safety, decreased agricultural production risk, increased livestock competitiveness and the development of proprietary technology and know-how in novel applications.		
Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute		1,223
Core funding is provided to the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI) which contributes to their mandate of assisting the agriculture industry through applied research, development and testing. PAMI focuses on farm equipment design, bio-energy and processing as well as livestock production and economics through their relationship with the Western Beef Development Centre.		

Strategic Research Programs	3,772
Provides funding to cover the salaries of 15 Research Scientist/Technician teams at the University of Saskatchewan and the Western Beef Development Centre. The program covers four broad research themes, including crop genetic improvement, foods and bio-product development, soils/environment and livestock research.	
Ag-West Bio Inc.	1,500
Agriculture contributes to Ag-West Bio Inc. to function as a catalyst for Saskatchewan's bioeconomy, helping to move research to market. Entrepreneurs commercializing their innovations come to Ag-West Bio for pathfinding and help creating a sound business plan.	
Business Risk Management	104,203
Provides the provincial contributions to the AgriStability and AgriInvest Programs.	
Crop Insurance	201,665
Provides funding for the SCIC to administer insurance programs which protect grain and livestock producers from production failures due to natural hazards. SCIC also delivers programs which compensate producers for crop damage caused by big game and migratory waterfowl.	
Growing Forward 2 Program	26,411
Provides funding for the federal contributions for Strategic Initiatives under the Growing Forward 2 Framework Agreement with the federal government.	
Agricultural Crown Land Sale Program	20,497
Cost of providing incentives to purchasers of leased Crown land.	
Miscellaneous	
Crops and Irrigation Branch – provides funding to Irrigation Crop Diversification Corporation for non-district irrigation members.	200
Crops and Irrigation Branch – provides funding to irrigation districts for the provision of water to Ducks Unlimited projects.	390
Crops and Irrigation Branch – provides funding to rural municipalities for the rehabilitation of irrigation bridges.	58
Lands Branch – provides compensation to rural municipalities and Conservation and Development Authorities for tax levies on vacant patented Crown land and for arrears owed on behalf of former Crown land lessees.	59
Livestock Branch – grant to the Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan in support of investigation of animal welfare complaints.	559
Livestock Branch – grant to Livestock Services Saskatchewan in support of the transition of livestock inspection services to industry.	446
Livestock Branch – grant to producers in support of the 2016 Bovine Tuberculosis Assistance Initiative.	60
Various – change in valuation allowance and provision for loan losses	171
Total Third Party Funding	387,270

Appendix F

(2016-17 New and Amended Regulations)

Amended Regulations:

The Stray Animals (Lawful Fence) Amendment Regulations, 2016 – The amended regulations address concerns regarding wild boar running at large, threatening native wildlife and habitat. The amendments clarify the definitions of farmed wild boar versus wild boar running at large and prescribe stricter requirements for farmed wild board fences to reduce escapes.

The Municipal Hail Insurance Regulations – The amended regulations changed the maximum indemnity that Saskatchewan Municipal Hail Insurance can provide to customers.

The Premises Identification Regulations – The new regulations require all livestock producers to have a Premises identification Number and will provide the authority for the Ministry to use cross compliance as a tool to increase participation in the program.

The Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation Amendment Regulations, 2017 – The amended regulations enable SCIC to implement changes to the Crop Averaging Program for SCIC.

The Provincial Lands (Agriculture) Regulations – The new regulations fully support the new *Provincial Lands Act, 2016*, and clarify how provincial land is administered. The regulations set out a framework that balances economic, environmental and social objectives for future land use decisions.